

Christianity and Society

- Confusion in Evangelism

GEORGE D. YOUNGER

- Churchly Know-How

ARNOLD W. HEARN

- Desegregation and Churchmanship

GALEN R. WEAVER

- The Cleveland Conference

ROBERT W. SPIKE

- Editorials

- Book Reviews

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

A Quarterly devoted to Christianity and Social Reconstruction

Reinhold Niebuhr, *Editor*
Arnold W. Hearn, *Associate Editor*
Douglas Sturm, *Managing Editor*

Published by

Christian Action

Reinhold Niebuhr and Liston Pope
Honorary Chairmen

Executive Council

Fern Babcock	Charles D. Kean
Donald L. Benedict	George Kelsey
John C. Bennett	William H. Kirk
Robert M. Brown	Huber F. Klemme
David S. Burgess	Elizabeth P. Lam
Frederick Carney	Ernest W. Lefever
L. Maynard Catchings	David D. Lloyd
J. Gordon Chamberlin	Cornelius Loew
Rufus Cornelsen	Edward LeRoy Long, Jr.
Stephen T. Crary	Alexander Miller
Robert A. Gessert	Albert T. Rasmussen
Ray Gibbons	Roger L. Shinn
James Gustafson	Frances Smith
Robert T. Handy	Kenneth Underwood
Arnold W. Hearn	Winnifred Wygal
F. Ernest Johnson	George D. Younger

John C. Bennett, *Chairman*
Robert T. Handy, *Secretary*
Douglas Sturm, *Executive Secretary*

537 West 121st Street
New York 27, New York

Table of Contents

	PAGE
Editorials	3
Confusion in Evangelism	7
by George D. Younger	
How to Top 5.6%, and Other Churchly Know-How	11
by Arnold W. Hearn	
Frustration of Desegregation by Protestant Churchmanship	15
by Galen R. Weaver	
The Cleveland Conference on the Churches and Social Welfare	17
by Robert W. Spike	
Book Reviews	19
(Limitations of space have prevented the inclusion of "Conversation" in this issue.)	

Contributors in This Issue

• George D. Younger is minister of Mariners' Temple (Baptist) in New York City. • Arnold W. Hearn is an instructor in Philosophy of Religion and Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary, New York. • Galen R. Weaver is Racial and Cultural Relations Secretary of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches. • Robert W. Spike is Director of the Department of Evangelism for the Congregational Christian Churches. • Robert McAfee Brown is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Christianity and Society is published quarterly by Christian Action. Subscriptions: U.S., \$1.50 per year; 40¢ per copy. England and Australia, 10 shillings and 5 pence per year. Subscriptions should be sent to Mrs. Nola Meade, Secretary, 3041 Broadway, New York 27, N.Y., or to Rev. Norman Spoor, Annandale, North End Road, London N.W. 11, United Kingdom.

CHRISTIANITY *and* SOCIETY

EDITORIALS

The New Face of the Communist Conspiracy

The summit conference at Geneva now appears, in the light of the second Geneva conference and subsequent events, to have been but a pleasant interlude or even a pleasant dream. It undoubtedly accomplished one important objective. It prompted the mutual acknowledgment of both sides that neither side desired or plotted war in an atomic age. But it becomes daily more apparent that the Russians wanted no more than a relaxation of tensions without paying any concessions for this boon. They are much more resourceful in their strategy than in the Stalin era, and they have proved to be no less stubborn and venomous than before.

The first of the hard realities which we must face in the post-Genevan era is that the Russians do not intend to sacrifice East Germany except at the price of the neutralization of the whole of Germany. That is a price which the West cannot afford to pay. On the other hand the Russians cannot afford to pay our price for unification without imperiling the morale of their whole satellite empire. This stalemate is old. The new element in it is that Geneva has freed the Germans and Russians to reach bilateral agreements. Adenauer will try to prevent any agreement being reached to the disadvantage of the Western alliance. But Adenauer is old, and the Russians can offer the Germans attractive terms which will be difficult for any German Government to reject.

The second fact to be discerned in the new face of the Communist conspiracy is that the Russians have found a way of surmounting what seemed to be the impregnable barrier of the Moslem world. They have done this by the simple expedient of offering an arms deal to Egypt, still smarting from its defeat at the hands of the new state

of Israel and, under a military dictatorship, anxious to prove that the old corruption, which helped to defeat it has been eliminated. In consequence the Middle East has become a powder keg with a very precarious status quo.

But by far the most important development in the post-Genevan Communist conspiracy against the world is the effort of the Russians to probe into the weakest parts of our defenses in the recently and still colonial nations of Asia and Africa. It has always been an error on our side to think of the struggle with communism to be an obvious struggle between democracy and tyranny. For the first impact of the technical world upon the non-technical civilizations was an imperialistic one. This impact was never as purely exploitative as the liberal and Marxist theory assumed. But even if the imperial power introduced the arts of a technical and democratic civilization to subject peoples, it never failed to arouse their resentments by the racial arrogance of the imperial power. The whole of Asia and Africa is seething with residual resentments against this arrogance, which the Communist bosses Bulganin and Khrushchev have been skillfully exploiting in their Asian tour.

Six hundred million colonial peoples have been set free since the Second World

Announcement

The national office of Christian Action is being closed as of February 1, 1956, as members of the organization have been or are being informed in greater detail. The fellowship will continue on a less formal basis.

Christianity and Society will continue publication.

War, but a hundred million remain in colonial status, most of them in Africa. Therefore the Communist bosses pose as fellow Asiatics and in any case as champions of freedom against colonialism. The stupidity of the French, first in Indo-China and now in their policy in North Africa, continually plays into the hands of the Communists.

We have done little to exploit the advantages of our traditional anti-colonial policy. We had only a short flyer in imperialism after the Spanish war, and Cuba and the Philippines have been set free. We were not free of economic imperialism of course, particularly in the "banana republics" of Latin America. But it is rather ironic that we should be regarded as the symbols of imperialism, though, not by virtue but by virtue of our continental economy, we never had a real empire; and that the most stubborn imperialists of our day should be the people who gave us the slogan of "liberty, equality, fraternity" in the French revolution.

This ironic situation was enhanced when our Secretary of State made the stupid blunder of giving a joint statement with the Portuguese Ambassador on the subject of the disputed Portuguese province of Goa off the coast of India. For the sake of a minuscule bauble of colonialism we have lowered our moral prestige in India by a few more degrees. It is low in the whole of Asia, chiefly because the Republican party before Eisenhower, and partly despite Eisenhower, has persisted in interpreting the political problem of a continent in the turmoil of emancipation from tutelage to be a chiefly military one, which could be solved by the resolute support of a corrupt nationalist regime in China against a Communist one. Thus we have become the chief "imperialists" in the eyes of Asia while the former imperialist power, Great Britain, has been trying to restrain us in our heedless policy. That is perhaps the crowning irony of this strange development.

Our only concession to the realities produced by these reactions to past and present imperialism, has been a mild act of penance in terms of our technical assistance pro-

gram, which is now threatened in the interest of balancing the budget. Our nation will never win the fight against the Communist conspiracy until we have a policy in both Asia and Africa which unequivocally supports the just aspirations for freedom of subject peoples and helps them to acquire the arts of both a technical civilization and of political democracy. The latter art is not as easily learned as the former one. Both are necessary.

R. N.

The Political Situation in America

Nothing could prove the fluid character of human history and the vanity of all human securities more vividly than the rapidly shifting realities in the political scene in our own nation. Only three short months ago a very popular Republican president returned from the summit conference and received popular acclaim for having brought "peace in our time" and thus crowning his achievements at home and abroad with the hope of a new day in international relations in which the Russian bear or lion had somehow miraculously been made into a lamb. The world seemed very bright particularly to Republicans. How could any Democrat beat Eisenhower and the Republican slogan of "peace and prosperity"?

Since then almost everything which has happened has disturbed this idyllic picture of the kingdom of God on earth, a very special kingdom which had added to the traditional symbols of ultimate bliss the almost universal possession of a Cadillac or at least of some automobile with "push-button driving." The popular President suffered from a heart attack, and this coronary thrombosis must go down in current history as one of those historical contingencies which may change the very course of history. The Presidential health improved very rapidly so that the Republicans now hope more assuredly and less desperately that he will run in the next election. If he does he will be hard to beat for he is still very popular. But he is no longer regarded as unbeatable even by Republicans. The Eisenhower mystique seems suddenly to have evaporated.

Perhaps the main reason for the development was the second Geneva conference, this time of the foreign secretaries, which made it crystal clear that the Russians did indeed desire to relax international tensions but were not willing to yield or retreat from any of their positions. The sheep's clothing of the Russian wolf (we must change these animal symbols rather too hurriedly for consistent metaphor) was discarded after a brief month. The Russian monster (bear, lion or wolf) seemed more formidable than ever before, if for no other reason than that he had acquired the guile of the fox. We could no longer count on the Communist adversary cancelling out our mistakes by more grievous miscalculations of its own.

Then too, it became increasingly apparent that the "prosperity" part of the slogan was as dubious as the "peace" part. We had, it is true, full employment beyond the dreams of Henry Wallace. But the farmers' income continued to sink almost catastrophically. The Administration farm program of flexible price supports may not have been the cause of this flaw in our prosperity; however, in politics there is no scientific analysis of cause and effect but only very rough pragmatic judgments. These judgments were not favorable to the Administration. Furthermore, the merger of the CIO and the AFL and the Administration's failure to keep its promise to amend the Taft-Hartley law made it almost certain that labor would be in almost solid opposition to the Republican candidate. Thus by a series of untoward events the Republicans were plunged from a state of roseate hopefulness to practical hopelessness. The Republican right wing, held in check by the Eisenhower popularity, came out of the cellar and Senator Knowland made the inevitable criticism, that Eisenhower had followed the Truman-Roosevelt policy in foreign affairs. The poor Vice President, who only yesterday had a Presidential nomination in prospect, now saw even the Vice Presidential nomination slipping from him. For it was quite apparent that an ailing President would have to be teamed up with a more

formidable Vice Presidential candidate than the wonder-boy of recent conservatism and present "liberalism." The independent voters would scrutinize the second man on the ticket too closely and they might even remember that famous television show of the last campaign. Nixon's fate is a symbol of the power of the independent voter in our nation, and that power, incidentally, is the key to the stability of democracy.

Meanwhile the Democrats had difficulty in preserving a measure of the appearance of sincerity as they expressed regret over Eisenhower's illness. But the insincerity or seeming insincerity did not last very long because under the rapidly shifting historical panorama it became apparent that they might be able to win, even if Eisenhower decided to run again. If his improvement continues, the poor man will be practically forced to run, for party pressure upon him will be so great.

The candidacy of Adlai Stevenson has won so much general acclaim that the prospect of his carrying the convention and securing the nomination virtually by acclamation have become very plausible. The prestige carried over from the last campaign is immense. He is intellectually and morally the most exciting candidate to confront the nation in many a decade. At present his candidacy is challenged only by Kefauver and Governor Harriman. Kefauver has a very popular appeal, but the inner circle in the party do not like him, partly because he is unpopular with the urban bosses of the municipal machines and partly because he is not too bright. Harriman has been a good governor and has a distinguished record of service to the nation. He would be an excellent Secretary of State. But he would be a poor candidate if nominated; and comparison with the eloquent Stevenson practically eliminates him. Harriman no doubt thinks that the governorship of the state of New York has so frequently been the springboard to the presidency that the board can be used again. But he has practically eliminated himself by two fateful mistakes. The one was not to realize that a Tammany spokesman for his candidacy represents a

kiss of death as far as the nation outside of New York State is concerned, for the country knows nothing about the reform of Tammany. It does not honor DeSapio as the instrument of that reform but suspects him of being just another slick New Yorker with an Italian name. Harriman's other great mistake was a matter of timing. He thought he could challenge Stevenson on the issue of "moderation." He should have known that the desire for moderation is the dominant mood of the nation and that it will find plenty to choose between Eisenhower's and Stevenson's, between Republican and Democratic versions of moderation, not to be interested in the ethos of the Fair Deal or the New Deal. It will not go back upon the standards achieved in the Roosevelt-Truman era. It has a growing respect for that doughty common man, Harry Truman. But that does not prove that it feels that his "hit 'em hard" technique is the only way of winning an election. R.N.

Threats of Persecution

Many of us feel close to the events on Providence Farm in Mississippi where two men are remaining at their jobs in spite of lawless threats and at a considerable risk to themselves and their families. Eugene A. Cox, the manager of the cooperative farm, and Dr. David R. Minter, who is in charge of a clinic on the farm, were warned by a mass meeting of seven hundred citizens to leave Holmes County because they admitted that they opposed racial segregation on Christian grounds. There has been no violence, but many efforts have been made to intimidate them. One sign of the seriousness of the situation is that insurance policies on the clinic and other buildings have been cancelled by two large national insurance companies. The doctor's practice has been reduced by fifty percent as his patients have been intimidated. These men are staying on in spite of the threats against them. They have lived on the farm for more than twelve years and they have had a distinguished record of service to people of both races in the area. Those who know the situation fear that, if they are forced to leave, the results of nearly twenty years work on this co-

operative farm may be lost. Our readers doubtless know that the Farm was established to help meet the problems of share croppers by Dr. Sherwood Eddy in close cooperation with Reinhold Niebuhr and that the predecessor of Christian Action, the Frontier Fellowship, gave the project strong support. The Reverend Sam Franklin, well known to our readers for his courageous prophetic work as a missionary, was the first manager of the farm.

This threat to Providence Farm can be traced to the work of the "White Citizens Councils" which are springing up in many southern states. They represent the respectable and the politically and economically powerful groups in those states, and in Mississippi there seem to be few influences which can counteract them. There are a few editors who deserve great credit for daring to oppose them in Mississippi. The churches, whose teachings when they speak nationally are opposed to segregation, seem impotent in those local situations. One Presbyterian minister, the Reverend Marshall Calloway, who protested against the lawlessness and injustice of the treatment of Mr. Cox and Dr. Minter, was asked by his church to resign. It is very costly for a minister to say locally what his own denomination represents in its official teachings, including the Presbyterian Church of the U.S. (Southern) to which Mr. Calloway belongs.

It is difficult to stand by while so many things happen to our fellow citizens under conditions which make it self-defeating to do much to help them directly from outside their own community or region. The National Council of Churches has set a good pattern in authorizing the expenditure of funds by Church World Service to help persons who lose their jobs in situations of this kind. The General Board spoke of "instituting and financing a program of relief for ministers and their people, white or Negro, who are victims of persecution as a result of efforts in behalf of justice." More and more ways must be found for the larger units of the Church to help those in local situations who struggle to keep faith with essential Christian convictions.

J. C. B.

Confusion in Evangelism

GEORGE D. YOUNGER

Theological conversation among Protestants more and more is emphasizing the confessional and the biblical. At the same time the conversation of the world relies less and less on a sense of the reality of God—not to mention the symbols of biblical religion. In such a situation only the most insensitive churchman would deny the need to rethink the way in which Church and Gospel confront the world in the work of evangelism and missions. And our theological dialogue itself threatens to become inbred if divorced from Christ's command: "Go . . . and make disciples."

When we look at the field of evangelism, we find confusion, both in practice and theology. This confusion is so great that the only wonder is that the churches have gone so long without feeling the need for rethinking and reforming what they are doing in evangelism.

Confusions in practice are the most obvious. Lay people are likely to reject one minister as not being "evangelistic" because his preaching does not conform to the stereotypes of revivalism and to welcome another as a true evangelist even when he devotes his entire attention to visiting church members and promoting an annual "revival" for the faithful. National church bodies make pronouncements about and promote campaigns for "strengthening our spiritual life" and "reaching the unreached," but their major standard of evangelistic depth and effectiveness continues to be the statistics showing the number of conversions, baptisms or new members.

Some local churches, embarrassed by the necessity of having an "evangelism committee," are now calling it their "membership committee" after the example of other organizations to which the members belong. And in many towns the only "Mission" serves transient men, while "Missions" is an activity supported by local churches but carried on by other people in other places.

Far more serious than such confusions in our practice of evangelism in America are the confusions in theology. Every major denomination has staked its approach to twentieth-century America on a two-pronged attack of church extension and visitation evangelism. Church extension in practice is questionable enough with its emphasis on "high-potential areas" in the residential suburbs, but church extension in theory is worse. It is based on the assumption that our churches must "follow our people" as they move out of the cities and off the farms and to the North and West. "Following our people" is certainly not evangelism. Also, the forces of depersonalization in America today are so great that it is doubtful if any church can think of these people or any other people as "our people."

Visitation evangelism, in which lay people go out "two by two" for friendly visits to make "new friends for Christ," is chummy but lacking in the sense of divine majesty and serious mission that are required for evangelism. This kind of call may seem perfectly proper in a suburban living room, but it is quite out-of-place in a worker's bungalow or city flat. The commitment which is asked—to sign a decision card and attend church—is a meager one and does not begin to touch the vast indifference of non-church people to the church and all it stands for. Yet it is on church extension and visitation programs that we are relying to present the Gospel to America.

The very language we use in our sermons, in our church meetings and in our denominational literature bespeaks an inadequate theology of evangelism. For example, we still speak of "winning souls," although only I Peter 3:1 gives any hint that a person may be "won," and even that passage does not specify to what he is "won." As for "soul," a study of the use of that word in the New Testament carries far beyond the simple stereotypes used in present-day talk

about evangelism. Other phrases in common currency in evangelism could stand theological analysis. To start a list, here are a few: "telling the stories of Jesus" to children, securing "decisions," asking people to "accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior" and speaking of social action as "social evangelism."

Examples of our present confusion, both in practice and theology, could be multiplied, but it is far more important that we understand the causes of our confusion and begin to find ways of clarifying our conception of evangelism. Much of our confusion in America has been inherited from nineteenth-century revivalism. This has been compounded by the effects of the twentieth-century Administrative Revolution upon the churches.

In many sections of the country, in many denominations and in a significant part of most denominations, the patterns of nineteenth-century revivalism continue to dominate both serious and superficial thinking about evangelism. The "old-time religion" that was good enough for father and mother is assumed to be the only kind of religion that can effect a valid Christian transformation. Thus, the individual church member is prepared for his assured place in heaven by being bred in gospel singing and testimony, born in an emotional decision, nurtured with selected and interpreted Bible passages, and revived by regular exposure to the message that first brought conversion.

Completely overlooked is the fact that this "old-time religion" is primarily a product of the nineteenth century and would not have been good enough for great-grandfather and great-grandmother, not to mention the English Independents or Calvin or Luther. Still, those who accept this kind of religion as the only valid form of Christianity are certainly the norm for American Protestantism, in point of numbers if not of influence. Those outside and those inside the churches are most likely to think of evangelism and evangelistic religion in terms of their stereotypes of behavior and speech. Their positive influence seems to be growing, both in old-line conservative de-

nominations and in the newer sect groups.

If this represents the positive hold of revivalistic patterns on our churches, we must also recognize their negative influence. There are others who, reacting against the excesses and inadequacies of revivalism, deliberately frame their personal faith, their church life and their approach to the world so as to allow no place or need for any kind of evangelism. Still others look wistfully at the growing strength of the churches practicing revivalism and wish that their faith were great enough to produce such results.

The twentieth-century Administrative Revolution, which has left its mark on business and industry and government, has also made its contribution to the confusion in evangelism. Its office practices, its public relations techniques, its tendency to institutionalize have all become working tools of evangelism. Every denomination has its department of evangelism, and every local church is urged to have a committee on evangelism, in addition to committees on evangelism at various intermediate levels. So, evangelism has become a compartmentalized process in the efficient institutional working of American churches.

National offices produce literature on evangelism which, it is hoped, will penetrate beyond a pastor's desk. Advertising men donate space and time to urge people, "Take someone to church this week—You'll both be better for it." Religious radio and television experts labor over human-interest shows to raise Christianity's rating. And local churches use "kits" and "packages" and "workshops" and other gimmicks to organize their visitation campaigns. The machinery is well-oiled and operating at high speed, but it seems chiefly capable of producing a favorable climate for "religion," an increased interest in sending the children to church school and having one's name on the church roll, and frustration for ministers and lay leaders who must include "evangelism" as one more indispensable church activity.

Some would see Billy Graham and his crusades as a throwback to the days of Moody and Sankey, but he is better under-

stood as a conspicuous combination of nineteenth-century revivalism and twentieth-century ecclesiasticism, the very combination creating our present confusion in evangelism. Billy's messages and the setting in which they are presented are designed to give the appeal of the "old-time religion." And the organizational skill of his advance man, his public relations men and his follow-up team could only be matched in the fund-raising departments of the major denominations.¹

Indeed, it is when tawdry phrases out of the vocabulary of revivalism are mated with the very worst in present-day popular culture that our confusion is most apparent and demands reformation. Neon crosses flashing "Jesus Saves," popular ballads about "faith, hope and charity," appeals to the "friends out there in Radioland," and catalogues full of cheap items stamped with religious pictures and Bible verses certainly do not represent valid attempts to make the Gospel relevant to America in the twentieth century.

To get beyond our present confusions and establish a firm basis for the work of evangelism, American churches would do well to recognize first that evangelism should never be thought of as only part of the work of the church; evangelism is the life of the church itself. This is very clearly stated in the summary of the Survey on Evangelism made for the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches:

Evangelism is the participation of the total Christian community in Christ's mission to the world;

Every single aspect of the Church's life and activities is of evangelistic significance;

In proclamation, fellowship and service, the Church must demonstrate the Gospel in the actual life context of men;

Laymen are on the frontline, served by the ministry whose function it is to equip the people of God for its mission;

Laity and ministry together strive to be of the mind of Him who "emptied himself" in service to the world.²

The whole life of the church is evangelism. It cannot be cubbyholed into a national secretary's office or a local church committee. It cannot be guaranteed by inter-agency conferences. And it cannot be started — or stopped — by the adoption of a denominational program emphasis. Administrative convenience should not be allowed to have precedence over basic theological necessities.

It is easier to see our way through the confusions created by denominational and local church organization of evangelism than it is to lay the ghosts of nineteenth-century revivalism. American churches must recognize how partial, how limited, how warped is the revivalistic conception of evangelism. Nothing has been more helpful to me in this respect than the typology used by J. C. Hoekendijk of the Netherlands to characterize the variety of approaches to evangelism.³

Using key New Testament words as labels, Hoekendijk sees much of what has traditionally been called "evangelism," including all of revivalism, to involve essentially the approach of *metanoia*. The emphasis is on personal decision. (*Metanoia* is customarily translated as "repentance" in English versions.) This type of evangelism focuses its efforts on securing a dramatic personal change, a decision, a commitment in the opportune moment (*kairos*). Because it is existential and often emotional, it usually involves a deep personal experience followed by shared personal testimony.

But Hoekendijk goes on to identify five other types of evangelism, each of which he

1. For a detailed analysis of a Billy Graham crusade, see James L. McAllister, "Evangelical Faith and Billy Graham," *Social Action*, March 1953.
2. *The Christian Hope and the Task of the Church*; Harper and Bros., New York; 1954; II, p. 59.
3. Found in a study and discussion outline, "The Theology of Evangelism (and Missions)" (mimeographed), published as part of the Theological Students' Correspondence of the World's Student Christian Federation in April 1951. His terminology is evident in the survey report prepared for the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches by the Commission on Evangelism, of which he was secretary. (*vid. supra*)

feels to have a valid claim to be called "evangelism." The group includes:

1. *kerygma*—the proclamation of the divine events which have brought redemption to the world. Acknowledgment of their genuineness and validity does not necessarily involve a personal change or decision. This work of proclamation involves not only preaching but also teaching (*didache*).

2. *koinonia*—the transfer of loyalty from one community to another. Here it is recognized that all personal decisions have a social context, so the focus is on securing a change of communal attachment. In societies where social groups are still strongly integrated, groups can be approached as a whole to secure a mass decision. Where modern life has broken down community and atomized even the primary group of the family, evangelism can be directed toward the formation of a community.

3. *diakonia*—service to the whole of life. This approach can have two possible fields of emphasis. A comprehensive approach through social action would aim at remaking the total community. A more personal readjustment could be made through the use of psychotherapy and counselling.

4. *oikodome*—the upbuilding of a believer which helps him grow into "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Here the stress is on securing discipleship and leading the individual from one stage of the life of sanctification to the next. Although this is what revivalism claimed to be doing in conducting periodic evangelism of the church itself, the tendency in practice was to recreate the original conversion experience rather than to encourage Christian growth.

5. *martyrion*—martyrdom, "the limit case of evangelism." When the Gospel must be proclaimed with no hope of tangible results, this is the only possible form of evangelism.

It is possible to quibble with Hoekendijk's terms or to question his definition of their reference, but the central part of his analysis is unassailable: there are more ways of preaching the Gospel and making disciples than the one used by Protestant re-

vivalism to secure its decisions. There are more ways of proclaiming and teaching the gospel than those which the leaders in homiletics and in Christian education are fond of stressing. And service to the whole of life does not need to be justified only on humanitarian grounds but is itself an essential part of the Christian witness.

This wholeness of the work of evangelism is made clearer when we look at the church of the New Testament using Hoekendijk's typology. The Acts of the Apostles shows us that proclamation of the divine event (*kerygma*) was the central element in the apostolic preaching. Coupled with this proclamation was the demand for a decision to repent and believe (*metanoia*).⁴

However, the proclamation of the Gospel message in the New Testament is never independent of the fellowship (*koinonia*) in which the new life is lived and made real. It is in the fellowship, in the Body of Christ, that the work of teaching (*didache*) can take place and the believer can be built up (*oikodome*).

As the church turns out to the world, it expresses itself in service (*diakonia*) to the whole world. This service is the church's "mode-of-existence in this world," the demonstration of its message and life in humble service. If the world refuses to be served, it rejects (*martyrion*) not only the service but also the Giver of the message and the fellowship.

Kerygma, koinonia, diakonia — proclamation, fellowship, service — these are the key words of the work of evangelism as described in the New Testament. As the church turns out to the world, its proclamation and its fellowship finally express themselves in service.

Saying that American churches must go beyond stereotypes of revivalism and gain a sense of the wholeness of the church's mission is not the same as actually beginning the process of reformation and renewal. This process will require new concepts of what the church is doing in its proclama-

(continued on page 19)

4. Acts 2:38f., 3:19-21, *passim*.

How to Top 5.6%, and Other Churchly Know-How

ARNOLD W. HEARN

One of the predilections of our culture is to imagine that all problems can be reduced to technical problems. In such a context it is inevitable that this illusion should infect the Church's understanding of itself.

Dr. Weldon Crossland, pastor of Asbury-First Methodist Church, Rochester, N.Y., is symptomatic of a pervasive ecclesiastical ethos. According to the dust-jackets of his books, he is "a recognized authority on effective methods of church administration." He is also recognized as an eminently successful practitioner in this field. Ralph W. Sockman and Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam have supplied laudatory introductions to his books. Each of his volumes "seeks to gather up the best" from the experience of varied parishes and all major denominations. They meet with sufficient response that Abingdon Press continues to publish new ones: *How to Increase Church Income* (1947), *How to Build Up Your Church School* (1948), *How to Increase Church Membership and Attendance* (1949), *A Planned Program for the Church Year* (1951), and *Better Leaders for Your Church* (1955). As of November 1, 1955, these had sold a total of 35,633 copies. Since the nature of the books limits their potential audience almost exclusively to parish ministers, it is evident that this is already success; and they are still selling.

Dr. Crossland is thus a fair representative of a typical kind of American Protestant churchmanship. It is worth noting that one of his books is even recommended in *A Basic Theological Bibliography for Ministers*, published by one of our leading theological seminaries (which, as an act of filial piety, I forbear to name).

Ecclesiastical Technology

The essential problems confronting the Church, as Dr. Crossland conceives them,

are *technical* problems. For instance, evangelism: many of us have come to see that evangelism, rightly understood, concerns the Church's essential task of confronting the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The problems implicit in this vital and indispensable enterprise involve the most strenuous and serious wrestling with the realities expressed in *kerygma* and *didache*, the nature of man and contemporary society, and the relationship among these—understood in their deepest and most comprehensive dimensions. So I respond favorably when Dr. Crossland tells me imperatively and in bold-face type: "Think through your evangelistic problems." But I am let down when I discover what it is that I am to "think through." This thinking process consists of answering a list of twenty questions. (One soon discovers that Dr. Crossland apparently thinks in lists.) The first three questions are: "How many new members joined our church last year? How many of these were received on confession of their faith? Is this number more or less than 5.6 per cent of our membership, which for most churches is the dividing line between growth and decline?" The remaining seventeen questions are concerned exclusively with prospect lists, membership goals, dates, committees, and such. Evangelistic problems, then, are technical problems—so technical they can even be measured by reference to the figure 5.6!

And, of course, *techniques* are the things with which you handle technical problems. These "how to" books are little more than catalogues of the ecclesiastical applications of "know-how" in the fields of production and distribution, salesmanship and business administration, public relations and business management. Though an Oxford Rhodes Scholar, there is little evidence of creative thought in Dr. Crossland's suggestion that

the "most effective kind of attendance publicity is the personal invitation of the loyal member (satisfied customer), who commends his church (the article) to his friend (the prospective customer) and persuades him to attend (the sale)." And let it be noted that the terms in parentheses in the preceding quotation are not some characterization which I have interpolated. This is all Dr. Crossland's own idea.

Of course, techniques do have an undeniable place in the life of the Church. I first made the acquaintance of Dr. Crossland, through his writings, while serving as a parish minister and acutely aware that the "what is" of the Gospel must be matched by the "how to" of church administration. And, of course, there are analogies between the functioning of a church and the functioning of business and industry. Some of Dr. Crossland's suggestions could prove quite helpful to the judicious minister or lay official.

Yet, Christianly valid techniques must exist in organic relationship to the essential character of the *koinonia* which is the Church. Techniques will change from age to age and from place to place, but it is imperative in every age and every place that they express the enduring reality of the organic life of the people of the New Covenant.

When techniques are not controlled by the principles inherent in the life of the Body of Christ, but are treated as if they were autonomous, they reveal an astounding capacity to supply their own guiding principles—or, more accurately, they bring with them the value judgments of the culture in which they have been nurtured. This is the pitfall into which Dr. Crossland has tumbled unawares. It is symbolized by the dust-jacket of *How to Increase Church Membership and Attendance*. The design is a graph transversed by one bold, steeply ascending line—a Madison Avenue executive's dream of what a sales chart ought to look like. And the title (providing one does not get fussy about defining the term "church") is utterly descriptive of the contents. This is a book of gimmicks for boost-

ing membership and attendance, and it could serve just as well, *mutatis mutandis*, the purposes of any lodge, club, labor union, business or professional association, political organization, or drum and bugle corps. (I take back what I said about the potential audience being limited to parish ministers.) Yet Dr. Crossland thinks he has written a book about evangelism, but the guiding principles have consistently been determined by something other than the *evangel* of Jesus Christ.

Working With The Grain

Let us take a sober and sobering look at the result. The business of the ministry, as Dr. Crossland sees it, is a particular form of merchandising. It is essential to make the product attractive, to meet the existing demand, to create a demand if necessary, and to make acceptance easy on the part of the customer.¹ We must always "be optimistic," "accentuate the positive," and keep everything "friendly." There is almost more friendliness in Dr. Crossland than a misanthrope like myself can take. We are instructed (apparently without regard to the facts in the case) to tell new members that they are being welcomed "into one of the finest, friendliest churches anywhere;" we hear of "friendly visitations," the "friendly community census," a "friendly atmosphere," "friendly services," and the Finance Secretary's inevitable "friendly Quarterly Settlement Day Reminder."

Being unfailingly positive, we are constantly confronting "the brightest and most promising year our church has known for a long time." Things are always on the upswing; and this constitutes much of the appeal. We can always tell prospects how things are booming and of the "high standing of our church in the community." Dr. Crossland is fond of saying that his methods can be successfully employed by "any

1. The illustrative material is drawn from the five books mentioned above. However, more comes from *How to Increase Church Membership and Attendance* than from any other single work, since it is in the area of evangelism that the relationship between theology and techniques comes to its most obvious focus.

church of any size anywhere." The words run like a refrain throughout his writings. Apparently he has never deeply pondered the facts of sociology, not to mention the more remote situation of the church suffering persecution. His books are clearly addressed to the churches of the middle class.

Since no shrewd advertiser runs down his own product, these writings evidence no awareness of any valid prophetic critique of the Church itself. Dr. Crossland is thoughtful enough to provide a list of twenty common objections to the Church, but he is too good a sales manager not to have paired them with twenty canned answers. For example, if someone is honest enough to say, "I don't like the preacher," your answer should begin with the following sentence: "We who work with Dr. Smith and know him well, feel that he is a devoted, hardworking minister who does his best to serve his church." (Confidentially, I happen to *know* this Dr. Smith, and he really is a stinker.)

This lack of any prophetic judgment on the Church is matched by the absence of any basic criticism of the world, or at least of the segment of the world from which Protestantism draws its patrons. The assumption is that all decent people are basically Christian; all that is needed is the little shove that will get them into a church. "When asked if he believes in Christ and the Church, practically every prospect will answer Yes . . . They need but to be persuaded to translate their belief into action." One of the "seven valid assumptions" on which you can approach the fallen-away church member is that "he knows in his heart that he should be a more active . . . churchman." And, of course, "Children and young people are naturally religious. Fortunately the dark days when original sin and infant damnation in their cruder forms were part of the preaching and teaching have passed." Certain theological distinctions which seemed of some import to Martin Luther are now forgotten. When you find a Roman Catholic who has broken with his Church, you win him for Protestantism merely by assuring him that "he is still a

Christian in his soul." Of course, Dr. Crossland has not completely forgotten that the Gospel is to be preached to sinners. He thinks it should be preached to them too, but they appear as a special category. In one paragraph he divides mankind into children, young people, adults, *and* sinners. "Even an evil, sinful person . . . can become a Christian."

Becoming a Christian does, however, require a decision. Dr. Crossland is constantly speaking about the "decision for Christ." Decisions are mentioned so frequently on some of his pages that they begin to rival in quantity those confronting a professional egg candler—and one begins to suspect they are rivals in significance as well. The "decision" is supposed to have marvellous consequences: "one's life is changed. Sin, fear, and selfishness are driven out by faith, obedience, and Christlike living." But one looks in vain for the content that gives the decision such amazing power. Regardless of what may be Dr. Crossland's intentions, the techniques employed do not demand any basic re-orientation of life or thought. It is little more than a matter of signing a printed form on a 3 x 5 card, under the pressure of a team of two visitors who tell the prospect, "Your decision is . . . a promise you make to Jesus Christ that you will be a Christian. That doesn't take long—just a moment." The obligations are not very taxing. "Every Christian owes God and himself one hour of worship in church out of the 168 hours of each week." And to make the process of commitment as painless as possible, one of the evangelistic visitors will be holding out a pen or pencil in the manner of any good insurance salesman. (Insurance men are special heroes of Dr. Crossland's.)

Many have maintained that they could be believing Christians without belonging to the Church. However, this modern evangelism makes it clear that it is now quite acceptable to belong without believing. If a prospect confesses that he "can't believe everything the church teaches," the technique is to assure him that he really believes *enough*, and that the pastor will gladly tidy up any intellectual loose ends for him at

some future date, but for now, he had better make his decision and sign that card!

A favorite principle of Dr. Crossland's is to "work with the grain." This means one will appeal to almost any motive that gets results. It is all right to use flattery. If someone will not make a "decision for Christ" because he thinks he is already "just as good as many people in the church," then say to him, "You . . . are too big a man to compare yourself with some rather imperfect people." If someone is really looking for a congenial social club, appeal to him on the basis that he will find in the church "a growing circle of good friends." Or think of the conveniences! If the prospect objects, "I work so hard during the week that I have to rest on Sunday," just point out to him that "Our service is set late in the morning for folks like you, instead of at six, seven, or eight o'clock as the Roman Catholics do." And the benefits of church attendance are unlimited. There are good prudential reasons for going: "When you are *present* every Sunday, everything goes well!"

The biblical passages which ought to give Dr. Crossland pause come flooding to mind. "Take up thy cross;" "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" "When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him"; "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Dr. Crossland speaks of Christ as ideal, example, teacher, friend, and daily companion, but there is nothing here of the Cross — except such meaningless references as that in an effusive peroration which urges the minister to make the Church School "your chief cross and you will find it become your chief joy!"

Manipulating Man and God

The Gospel according to Weldon Crossland is not what has been called "the whole Gospel for the whole man." It is more a piece of the Gospel for a piece of the man. Not even the immediate and inescapable realities of sin and death receive much notice. And there is no awareness of the social context into which every man's life is woven. He considers that "moral breakdown" is often due to the relatively irrele-

vant matter of "indefinite and ineffective church-school teaching in the teen-age groups." The limited dimensions of Christian ethical concern are revealed in his listing of "pertinent and pressing questions, such as [drinking], cheating, lying, profanity, theft, snobbishness, jealousy, sensitiveness, looseness in personal relations, and selfishness." And, as we might expect, ethical questions turn out to be merely technical problems requiring for their solution only the right know-how. A Church School class can deal with the issues listed above in such a manner that the large majority (and here the italics are mine) "will possess the *technique* of handling *any* moral situation in a Christian way."

This is hardly the authentic *koinonia*, deriving its existence from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But it is worse than that. It is not even the best of secular culture, not even decent humanism. Being engaged in a merchandising operation, Dr. Crossland appreciates the values of efficiency, frequently referring to the experience and the methods of business and industry. And this brings him to the threshold of our culture's tendency toward depersonalization and a manipulative attitude toward people. Religious education is "indoctrination;" churches are institutional structures to be "built up;" and people are a kind of raw material to be "assimilated" into the structure.

One of the most difficult things to manipulate is a free spirit and an inquiring mind. Dr. Crossland handles these by refusing to acknowledge their existence. There is no recognition of real intellectual and ethical questions to be raised about the Christian faith and the Christian Church. He suggests that some of the objections to the Church "are spiritual defense mechanisms created to avoid facing honestly Christ and one's duty. Others are irreligious smoke screens, which are laid to hide the real reasons. Still others are nothing but red herrings of argument and prejudice drawn across the path of conversation to divert you."

Dr. Crossland's treatment of the role of the layman can likewise be questioned. He

(continued on page 20)

Frustration of Desegregation by Protestant Churchmanship

GALEN R. WEAVER

The pronouncements of all or nearly all of the denominations affiliated with the National Council of Churches are unequivocal on the renunciation of segregation within the life of the church. This doctrine of the sinfulness of racial segregation was enunciated most clearly in March, 1946, at the post-war conference of the Federal Council of Churches and was endorsed by various denominational assemblies beginning with the Congregational Christian General Council in June, 1946. After May 17, 1954, when the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its history-making decisions on public school segregation, national, regional and even state denominational bodies indicated their strong support for the policy of desegregation. In nearly every case they based their endorsement upon Christian grounds as well as democratic principles.

Relatively few local congregations have taken a similar stand following the leads of national and regional bodies. Moreover, the behavior of local congregations in the face of changes in population from all-white to part-Negro or all-Negro occupancy of the geographical parish has been far from uniformly commendable. The tendency has been and still is, in too many instances, to "run away" from the problem of integrating non-white persons into the congregation and the program of the local church. Frequently the difficulties are aggravated by the falling off of contributions because members are moving out of the parish or because of the withdrawal of support on the part of individuals who are antagonistic to welcoming non-whites. In such cases national resources are needed to assist, at least through a transitional period. These additional denominational resources are not always made available. The dilemma of the local minister and congregation is sometimes further complicated by the socio-economic

status difference between the members of the church and the in-migrating neighbors. This requires a large degree of imagination and flexibility if the church is to meet the new situation. It seems much less troublesome and costly to sell the property in a district into which Negroes are moving to a colored church, often of another denomination, and to accept a comity assignment in a "more desirable" part of the city or of suburbia.

In spite of these problems and complications, some local churches with or without financial aid from their national agencies have made the transition. When it is accomplished with wisdom, determination, and genuine warmth of human feeling the newly integrated congregation grows in spiritual stature, experiences a rebirth of purpose and dedication, and acquires additional personal and financial support even though it may lose a few individuals or families who cannot go along with the new policy and program. Each of us can probably cite a few examples of this type of creative response to population change, but the record is exceedingly fragmentary. It would be a real service if more complete data were collected, and especially if case histories could be made available to church officers and denominational administrators in the field of the urban church. The very serious trend of population change due to housing restrictions, namely, the tendency of all the white people to move out and thus to cause a shift to all-Negro occupancy of the neighborhood, still remains. The consequence of this is the undermining of the integrated status of the congregation even when a local congregation has decided on an inclusive policy.

Another type of impediment to progress in closing the gap between our pronouncements in favor of non-segregation and in-

tegration in church life and our practice of brotherhood is the homogeneous nature of the suburban communities where so much of the growth of population has taken place in the past fifteen years. It is precisely in suburbia that our Protestant churches are being initiated in very large numbers. This means all-white congregations effectually removed from the possibilities of interracial fellowship. Typically persons in suburban, homogeneous white churches say, "We have no racial problem." This results in indifference to attitudes of racial superiority and to the pressing problems of establishing new patterns of mutual respect between persons of different races and of open and equal opportunities for members of all racial and religious groups.

When one tries to understand the relatively poor success so far in getting policies which have been proclaimed at the national level accepted and practiced at the local level, one must take account of such basic factors as the following:

First, most church members are not well grounded in their religious convictions and beliefs. For example, the doctrine of the Church, so far as most Christians have one, is unclear and weak. This is probably more true of members of certain denominations than of others. Hierarchically organized denominations are likely to have a relatively "high" doctrine of the nature of the Church. It appears to be a fact that congregations in such denominations have somewhat less difficulty in desegregating themselves and in integrating persons of another racial ancestry and color. Wherever humanistic concepts prevail, and the Church is viewed as instrumental to something else, unless that something be the highest end, the Kingdom of God upon the earth, church members tend to handle church property in the same way that they handle business buildings and equipment. Ruling criteria are numbers to be recruited, forecasts of budget resources, and the needs and desires of a particular segment of the community.

Moreover, inclusive racial fellowship violates a common taboo in American white middle-class society and therefore raises

sharp differences of opinion as, for example, between those who are relatively more enlightened in their consciences and more cosmopolitan in their associations on the one hand, and the more conventional members on the other. Property values are believed to be at stake and interracial dating and marriage are said to be prompted by the social fellowship in a Protestant church and by living as neighbors.

To the extent that members of churches believe that such things are true, the question of inclusive membership regardless of racial ancestry raises controversy. This leads to the second major factor that arises from the fact that relatively few local congregations have either the structure or the experience for dealing with a complex social issue about which people feel warmly. The laity are rarely prepared to meet and resolve such a problem as desegregating and integrating the local church. The typical Protestant church is likely to be set up for the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, the administration and upkeep of physical property and financing the minister's salary. Too frequently a few of the larger givers and old-time members dominate policy. Grievously, the officers often are chosen more or less routinely and are poorly instructed and trained in their duties. Probably less than a fifth or a sixth of the local churches in most denominations have a really functioning social action committee or department to initiate study and action on critical social issues. Few churches have more than one meeting a year during which the membership engages in prayerful deliberation on the business of the church—not to speak of dealing with controversial ethical and social concerns. Many ministers have little or no training in democratic discussion leadership and decision-making, and consequently the lay members are likely to be less well equipped in this regard. Those members who are skilled in group process are not often encouraged and used in the work of their own local church.

The extreme competition for the time
(continued on page 22)

The Cleveland Conference on the Churches and Social Welfare

ROBERT W. SPIKE

The National Conference on the Churches and Social Welfare, which was convened by the National Council of Churches through its Department of Social Welfare, on November 1-4, 1955, was at the same time impressive and disappointing.

Fifteen hundred delegates and visitors constituted an undeniable documentation of the involvement of American Protestantism in social welfare services. Three years of planning had gone into the preparation of the conference. Two research volumes were produced. The first was *The Activating Concern*, which treats the historical involvement of the churches in the health and welfare field. The second was *The Changing Scene*, which provides for the first time a statistical picture of church welfare services. Dr. William J. Villaume, Director of the Department of Social Welfare, executed an extremely well run conference as far as mechanics and administration are concerned.

The preparatory material and the various speakers stressed three main points:

1. The churches were the pioneers in social welfare work of all kinds, from hospitals to settlement houses.

2. Organized social welfare, as we know it today, occupies a vast area of American institutional life. It is an important function of the state. It has developed an enormous body of professional and research equipment that is completely secular. The church bears only a small part of the welfare load and cannot realistically expect to make any large increase in such services.

3. Nevertheless, the church does not dismiss its responsibility for the welfare of the whole man, lest it be false to its gospel.

Distinguished church leaders such as Roy Ross and Eugene Carson Blake amplified various aspects of these truths. Bradshaw Mintener, Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare of the United

States, and a prominent Methodist layman, gave an exceedingly able address on the respective roles of government, social agencies, and churches in welfare responsibility that seemed far in advance of most statements from the present national administration, so far as any depth in understanding of the delicate balances of responsibility within a pluralistic culture is concerned.

Mintener also called on the church "to refresh and inspire the social conscience of the nation." Significantly, Dr. Leonard Mayo, general chairman of the conference and one of the nation's foremost social workers, stressed the same note, and went further to insist that responsible proclamation in relation to social issues was perhaps the greatest contribution the churches could make to social welfare in these days. He urged the churches to defend free speech and the right of the unpopular view.

At the end of the conference, Dr. Mayo was one of four churchmen honored by citations for great contribution to the field of the churches and social welfare. Dr. Robert F. Thomas, minister-physician of the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee, Russell L. Dicks, professor of pastoral psychology at Duke, and Dr. John C. Bennett, dean of the faculty at Union Theological Seminary, were the other men honored. The Church of All Nations, Methodist, Los Angeles, California, also received a citation.

The conference was particularly impressive in the great variety of interests and specializations which constitute American Protestantism's answer to social welfare problems. This was most apparent in the extensive number of section meetings organized around a number of interests.

Groups met to discuss functional areas of work such as: Child Welfare; Family Welfare; Health and Medical Care; Services to Groups in Settlements, Hospitals, Neighbor-

hood Houses and Local Churches; Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy Services; Education, Action, and Social Research; Services to Special Groups; Social Welfare Programs in Councils of Churches and Church Women; City Mission Societies and Urban Church Welfare Services; Rural Church Welfare Services.

The conference delegates were also assigned to groups dealing with general issues such as: Church-State Relations in Social Welfare; The Role of the Local Church in Meeting Community Welfare Needs; The Role of Volunteers in Church Social Work; Professional Education to Meet the Churches' Responsibilities in Social Welfare; Administering Church Agencies and Institutions; Relations of Church Welfare Agencies to Community Chests and Councils; Relationships of the Churches' Welfare Programs to Evangelism and Christian Education; The Role of the Church as Social Conscience in Meeting Welfare Responsibilities; Distinctive Contributions of Church Related Welfare Agencies and Institutions; The Role of Home Missions in Social Welfare.

Just the listing of these areas of interest indicates a great deal about the vastness of our involvement. What is more, each group, made up of about thirty to forty people, revealed that the leading social workers and social work educators of America were well represented as well as every denominational and interdenominational official whose job had even the remotest connection to welfare problems. Thus, the home missions executives, social action people, teachers of social ethics, etc., were *all there*. There should have been extensive encounters between the worlds of professional social work and the church and groups within the church, and yet, with the exception of some occasional side skirmishes, very little of this occurred. There was a curious lack of dynamism, as if the chessboard was all laid out and no one had the time or energy to begin the contest.

Thus while the conference was significant in its laying out of the problem, it gave very few leads as to where to go next.

There are serious problems of difference

in meaning and philosophy between the main stream of Christian thinking and the developing metaphysics of professional social work. There was no dialogue on this level whatsoever. The only step in this direction was Dr. Roswell Barnes' address on "The Historical and Theological Involvement of the Churches in Social Welfare"; probably the most arresting address of the conference. He gave an eloquent and original statement of the necessity for an explicit theological context within which to develop a social philosophy and program of social welfare "which takes into account the individual's environment and inner tensions, economics and inhibitions, inter-group conflicts and personal sin."

What was lacking was someone of like stature to speak from the background of the best social work theory and philosophy now extant in schools like The New York School of Social Work or Western Reserve.

The tensions between professional social workers and clergymen which manifested themselves in numerous ways in the section meetings (mostly through pointed humor and prolonged accounts of "how we do it") were generally passed aside as being primarily problems that could be solved by the two groups seeking to know one another better. The underlying philosophical conflicts could never be forced out into the open. There are real differences in the interpretation of the meaning of existence that would certainly emerge. And there would be surprising points of contact between some of the best insights of the psychiatric social work point of view and an explicitly Christian doctrine of man.

Because conversation on this level seemed to be ruled out by agenda and over all protocol for the occasion, the purely functional areas of discussion which were emphasized never did seem to move toward any new consensus. In an issue of *The National Council Outlook* before the conference, Mrs. Muriel S. Webb, Associate Secretary of the Department of Christian Social Relations of the National Council of The Protestant Episcopal Church,

(continued on page 23)

REVIEWS

The Christian Consensus

Christian Theology: An Ecumenical Approach, by Walter Marshall Horton; Harpers, New York; 1955; 304 pp.; \$3.75.

This book is illustrative of the creativity which can emerge through the modern ecumenical movement. The author has subjected these chapters to considerable scrutiny on both sides of the Atlantic, and the result indicates the extent to which a "consensus" is possible within Protestantism at the present time. The major doctrinal areas of belief are examined. These include, after a full introduction, the knowledge of God, the nature of God, God and the world, God and man, Christ the Savior, the Church and the means of grace, and the Christian hope. The procedure followed in each case is the same. First there is a statement of the problem man faces, to which the doctrine in question purports to offer some kind of answer. This is followed by a statement of the "Christian consensus" at the present time, and this in turn is followed by what is probably the most helpful part of each chapter—a statement of the unresolved issues clustering about each doctrine. Here we are honestly and unambiguously introduced to the main disagreements and conflicts which serve to blur the Christian answer. In the back of the book are questions and bibliographical material to aid the reader in thinking each doctrine through further.

The book is clearly aimed at theological students, and on the assumption that one does not cease to be a "theological student" upon graduation from seminary, it can be highly recommended to pastors who want to bring their theological thinking up to date. Furthermore, on the assumption that there ought to be "theological students" among the laity, this book can also be recommended to laymen who want to know more about Christian theology, and thus learn to love God with their minds as well as with their hearts. This is the author's most substantial and significant book to date.

ROBERT MCAFFEE BROWN

Evangelism

(continued from page 10)

tion of the Gospel, its life of fellowship and its service to the world.

The most obvious place to begin will be with pastors' sermons and orders of worship. Some ministers will have to give their favorite clichés a rigorous analysis through Bible study and theology. Others will have to take more seriously the dogmas and catchwords of our present culture. Still others will have to reacquaint themselves with the language of the Bible and unlearn their customary circumlocutions if it is the Gospel they are to be proclaiming. Increased emphasis on liturgy has shifted the "call" for converts in many churches to obscurity or oblivion, but aesthetics seems more important than theology in dictating the change.

More serious is the fact that we are relying on church extension and visitation programs to do the largest part of our work of proclamation. However, the atomization of American society and institutions and the religious indifference of great groups of our population mean that we must take on popular culture and the opinion moulders on their territory with our message. This means greater, rather than less reliance on broadcasting, films, newspapers and magazines. But it also means that technical gimmicks and popularity appeals should not be allowed to take the place of direct confrontation between the "wisdom" of our culture and the "scandal" of the Gospel.

If the entire life of the church has evangelistic significance, the fellowship of our churches must be strengthened and redirected if it is to go beyond caring for its own and picking up those new members who are most attracted to the church as an institution. If Christ accepted the limitation of human life in the Incarnation, the church as the Body of Christ must also accept limitation. It must be willing to become indigenous and share fully in the frustrations and predicaments of being the church of a particular group of people in a particular time.

There are dangers in such a procedure.

The experience of African churches that have been led back into witchcraft with a Christian flavor by their lay teachers can be matched by the experience of American churches in Suburbia that have so merged with their environment as to be virtually indistinguishable. We must rely on the grace of God and the discipline of life in a larger fellowship than the local church to forgive and correct such abuses.

A church fellowship without a mission is inbred and sterile. "To be a Christian is necessarily to be involved in a mission to the world."⁵ Looked at from the standpoint of Christ's missionary command, the church exists only by reason of having been committed with the mission to "go . . . and make disciples"; and then, only to the extent that it allows itself to be united with Christ in his mission. Missions, for the members of a church fellowship, cannot remain an activity supported at long distance; it is instead their daily and hourly call to grapple with the world in the name of Christ.

The church's call to mission leads out into service to the whole of life. Here is where revivalism's heresies, its consummate individualism and its naive assumption of secular progress, have taken their severest toll. The Social Gospel movement aimed at restoring wholeness to the life and service of the church, but it got no farther than the

establishment of parallel programs of social action. The church must learn how to reach out to man-in-society as well as to man-in-himself.⁶

One final transformation is necessary if the church is to be prepared for the possibility of rejection and martyrdom. Statistical measures of progress and continuous emphasis on institutional successes have left no room for *martyrion*, no comprehension of the possibility of defeat. Yet the meaning of the Cross is that Christ does not gain his victory in our terms—the world's terms—but in God's. We count it defeat; God makes it victory.

If we take the Atonement seriously, the church's prime concern should be to make Christ's witness in its time. Not numbers or wide influence or good fame, but being faithful is the church's responsibility. If Christ is to be rejected by the twentieth century or in any part of America or the world, then the church must expect to be rejected also. And if Christ is accepted, then the victory will be his not ours.

5. Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, Rolle, Sweden, 1951.

6. This discussion of the relation of social action to evangelism is only beginning to be opened up in articles like Roger Shinn's "Evangelism, Stewardship and Social Action," *Social Action*, September 1955.

Know-How

(continued from page 14)

firmly believes laymen should have an active place in the life of the church (and "active" is the word for it), and he explicitly bases this on the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. But one cannot escape the nagging sense that the real basis for the use of laymen is as an effective device for getting results. The church is more a team than a fellowship.

Dr. Crossland is first and last a programmer. Of course, there is nothing wrong with intelligent, long-range planning. But his is not the kind of planning that tries creatively to come to grips with the requirements of a unique situation. These are sure-fire, tried and tested techniques, to be taken

over with minimum changes by "any church of any size anywhere." He presumes to engineer that which is not mechanical, so that one finds Dr. Crossland, months in advance, scheduling "a glorious Christian experience," or an occasion "rich in enthusiastic fellowship." Everything is like clockwork. Even evangelistic visitors who are engaged in the activity of trying to win a convert by securing a "decision for Christ" are cautioned to limit their call to twenty-five minutes, since "few people are ever won after the first half-hour."

This passion for planning understandably breeds bureaucracy. Dr. Crossland presents the plans for a church year in the form of "A Specimen Church-wide Planning Conference Program," which consists of no less

than forty committee reports. This may not even be efficient, but it certainly threatens to fragment the organic wholeness of the Church into a collection of loosely related departments, no matter how well "co-ordinated" they may be.

In some ways the most disturbing single feature of these books is the pages, and pages, and pages devoted to canned material which simply cannot be used with sincerity when taken from tins. I mean things like the page-long speech to enlist a new chairman for the Finance Committee, a speech which Dr. Crossland calls "an effective piece of Kingdom salesmanship;" or the two-page "sales talk" (Crossland's term) for enlisting a new Church School teacher, an approach which has been tried and tested and proven "successful in more than 90 per cent of the persons" on whom it has been used; or the disingenuous page-long speech to be used in asking for a committee chairman's resignation. Parenthetically, it may be noted that one recommended means of handling the "problem official" is the "creation of a new committee in which the misfit leader's abilities can be utilized." Maybe that is where those forty committees came from.

The Protestant Dilemma

But the real problem in all this is not Weldon Crossland; it is American Protestantism. We have inherited a vocabulary, an institutional structure, and a set of cultural mores euphemistically termed "Christian habits," all of which have been largely evacuated of meaningful content. And in the absence of any defining heritage, we absorb from the prevailing culture the ideal of "success" and the techniques for reaching it, together with the religion of Americanism. Even ecumenicity, Dr. Crossland assures us, is in "the true American tradition," for, "like the thirteen colonies, the Protestant communions have voluntarily drawn together that they may form a more perfect union."

The orientation for which Dr. Crossland is an articulate spokesman is probably the most insidious current threat to the authenticity of the Church in America. It

is not the spectacular approach found in mass rallies or on the best-seller lists. It is the week-in, week-out workaday fabric of our churches. It is likely that no church accomplishes all the programs which Dr. Crossland outlines. But such programs represent the *norm* in terms of which American Protestantism understands itself and what it aspires to be. We are on the way to gaining the whole world, and never even noticing what we have lost.

And yet, have I in all this been quite fair to Dr. Crossland? Perhaps not completely. If he should chance to read this article, he would in all likelihood feel that he had been seriously misrepresented. And I, for one, would not blame him. He could say that he has been quoted out of context; and he could point to passages in his writings which specifically deny the very things with which he has here been charged. And he was undoubtedly sincere in his denials. (But what made the denials necessary?) Beyond that he could point out that he was writing "intensely practical" books, and they have here been treated as if they were books of theology.

But I do not think a revised estimate would be in order. What in these books appeals to practicing parsons is not their qualifying clauses, but their technical know-how. And the relation between faith and practice is so intimate that when the world has been permitted to call so many of the practical shots, the faith has been unwittingly betrayed. We are told on good authority that "God . . . loved the world." It is the Church's vocation to share in that love. But this is not love; it is an infatuation.

It is easy to criticize. Unfortunately, one with a sophomoric streak in his nature can even find it fun. But those of us who think we have a vocation in ivory towers can ill afford to be condescending toward the plight of pastors under pressure from the world, the flesh, and church officials. After all, it is quite true that they do have to do *something*. And those who know there is perversion in the orientation of Weldon Crossland still do not know quite what *should* be done.

The conspicuous creative attempts to face the real needs of the modern world—experiments such as the East Harlem Protestant Parish—have been in areas where the Church found it necessary to make some sort of new beginning. These are worthy isolated efforts to minister to the dispossessed, but we are not, by and large, the dispossessed. The strength of American Protestantism is in the middle class, which is mushrooming with suburbia. Prosperity is upon us, religiously as well as otherwise. But the church that is prospering is a church that, to employ a phrase of Karl Barth's, "simply wants to jog along in . . . the new ruts."²

Protestantism's bold efforts have been in the context of minority situations, but the life of our major denominations is in the framework of the more prevalent majority situations. Protestantism must come to creative grips with *this* society. It must face the problems of a technological culture which has produced an economy of (possibly precarious) abundance, and its by-product,

increased leisure, in which personal and social values are established by the mass media. Protestantism must understand in depth and relate itself meaningfully to the culture patterns of our small cities and farming communities, our plush, blazé Westchesters, and our Levittowns, where the average householder is in his twenties, everyone is comfortable, there are virtually no fathers in town during the week-day daylight hours, mediocrity is compulsory, and death an oddity.

We are living in a newborn and uncertain era in which the imperative necessity for the Christian community is to bring forth a contemporary expression of theology and consequent *techniques of church administration* (there is nothing wrong with the words!)—both of which are intrinsically Christian and shall have shared, perhaps painfully, a common birth.

2. *Against the Stream*, Philosophical Library, 1954, p. 229.

Desegregation

(continued from page 16)

of people in an over-organized culture militates against an orderly process of responsible inquiry, discussion, and consensus. Protestant church members are also on school boards, active on committees in a variety of organizations such as chambers of commerce, luncheon clubs, the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, boards of social agencies, professional societies, etc. Thoughtful and painstaking inquiry and deliberation take considerable blocks of time on the part of already busy people who serve on committees and who participate in meetings of the congregation. More is required than to reshuffle one's preconceived ideas and emotional biases.

Besides the factor of finding time there is the excessively high valuation placed by most of us on status and economic security. These are compromised even by listening to unconventional ideas and proposals. The social group pressures are enormously potent influences to "keep us in line" with

already established patterns. Probably this high susceptibility to the opinions of the group is connected with the profound spiritual insecurities of the time in which we live and to the lack of deeper securities that develop with a growing religious faith. It is the man or woman who has a deeply rooted faith in God and in the verities of life and, derivatively, in himself or herself that can furnish the creative margins of difference which instigate changes in long accepted social patterns.

The class stratification of Protestant membership, which appears to be an increasing characteristic of our church life, tends to restrict ministers, officers, committees, and average members in their awareness of issues and their readiness to do something about them. This economic class stratification is compounded by racial stratification that grows out of residential segregation. There is an extra-legal but none the less effective isolation of white from non-white Americans that is imposed by "gentlemen's agreements" among realtors, developers, and mortgage bankers.

All of these considerations help us to understand the slow progress being made in racially integrating the Protestant church as compared with recent successes in integrating the armed services, professional sports, the arts, the theatre, and even plants and offices of industrial firms. It is not very satisfying to our consciences to say, "Yes, but self-interest and legal sanctions operate in these realms, whereas in the church we have purely voluntary associations where these pressures are not effective." It hurts our pride to admit that the pressures of the Gospel, the constraint laid upon us by Christ, are so very feeble in comparison. We may try to reinforce the appeal by telling church members that the world-wide missionary enterprise is jeopardized crucially, as it surely is, by the continuation of color discrimination and segregation in the American churches. Few seem to believe that, and perhaps fewer still really care very much, since missionary outreach is the pas-

sionate interest of a small minority of church members.

The remedies must match the conditions to be changed. I believe they lie in these directions:

1. The recovery of a genuine doctrine of the Church as something more than a man-made institution.

2. A re-structuring of the churches so that they come abreast of the demands of an industrial, world-embracing age such as ours where the citizen is privileged, if he will, to be the source of political and social decisions that can and do make a profound difference to the welfare of all of us who live in an interdependent world in which distance has been annihilated.

3. A focusing of conscience and of intelligence upon the extremely crucial problem of providing enough adequate housing for all our people and making it available without restrictions as to the color or race or religion of those who need it and want it.

Conference

(continued from page 18)

laid out five alternative courses that the churches could take in social welfare:

1. To withdraw gradually from direct social services and provide their leadership in making the community-wide services, both voluntary and public, as adequate and effective as possible;

2. While supporting community services, further to show leadership by pioneering with needed new services as demonstrations to be taken over by the community when established;

3. To continue to sponsor church-related agencies as Christian witness in the community, keeping these services geared to current needs and highly competent in their spiritual and social ministry;

4. To sponsor competent social services for their own members;

5. To look toward financial and organizational federation of services in

the same way as those of the Jewish and Roman Catholic faiths.

It will be very surprising if the Cleveland Conference gives even a faint glimmer of guidance to Protestant policy makers.

The reams of reports from the study section will provide documentation for anyone that Protestants are interested in every phase of the American's social being, and beyond that lay stress on the crisis spots.

Undoubtedly the lack of creative struggle is due to nothing so much as the limitations of this kind of representative national conference. With genuine attempts at making the thing move, it still was the lumbering behemoth that any national church conference inevitably is. With every point of view represented, and everybody welcomed on an equal footing, nothing is likely to strike fire. Everything depends on the genius of preparation material, which in this case was something less than inspired. Perhaps the National Council of Churches ought to think through very carefully the relative importance of such World's Fair scale meetings before it promotes more in any field.

The Fellowship of the Church

The Christian citizen, as he tries to find his way, does not have to go alone. He is a member of a church which should help him in his citizenship. Churches may often fail in this, and at times the Christian may have to rebel against the outlook of the church in a particular time and place. He can appeal from that limited outlook to the witness of some segment of the larger church. Often the best appeal may be to the teaching that we find in the reports of the great conferences of the church at Oxford and Amsterdam and Evanston. But the church in a given country or in a particular parish should seek to help its members at the points of difficulty. . . . It should mediate to its members the judgment of God beyond their nation or their social group. It should bring together Christians who have common problems, so that they may learn from each other. It should encourage experts within the Christian community to contribute what guidance they have to give. It should help Christians who belong to different races and nations, whose experiences are in sharp contrast, who tend to be on opposite sides of public questions, to correct one another.

Always the church should be the teacher and inspirer of its members as they act in the world, and, when necessary, it should be for them a home, where in perplexity or under pressure from hostile forces they may find both light and healing.

—JOHN C. BENNETT in *The Christian as Citizen*
("World Christian Books," Association Press)